THE COMMONWEAL

A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts and Public Affairs

Volume XX | New York, Friday, August 31, 1934 | Number 18

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Previous issues of THE COMMONWEAL are indexed in the *Readers' Guide* and the *Catholic Periodical Index*

Published weekly and copyrighted, 1934, in the United States by the Calvert Publishing Corporation, 386 Fourth Avenue, New York, N. Y. United States: $5.00; Foreign: $6.00; Canada: $5.50; Single Copies: $.10.

THE ROOTS OF RECOVERY

"PARADOXES OF WORLD RECOVERY" is the striking title which the Foreign Policy Association gives to a report drawn up by its research staff, headed by Maxwell S. Stewart. With all due respect to the expert students of international affairs whose careful studies are summarized in this report, it would seem that they are almost as puzzled by the problems, the details of which they know so thoroughly, as the average man in the street. Without disrespect, it may be said that their report might be entitled: "The operation has been successful: but the patient is still in danger of dying." For after confidently declaring in the introduction to their report that "for the world as a whole, the ebb tide of the economic depression appears to have occurred in the early summer of 1932," and that since then the upturn "continued throughout 1933 and into the early months of 1934," the research workers come to the conclusion that, after all, the recovery they are dealing with has not affected "the vast majority of the world's population." Here indeed is a prize paradox. The world has recovered, at least in great part, from its vast economic slump, according to all the indexes, statistics, government reports, and similar data; yet "the vast majority of the world's population" has not been affected by this great good. How is this paradox to be explained? Another question which presents itself is: what is this "world" which has recovered? Certainly, it is not the living, suffering, troubled, puzzled mass of human beings who make up "the vast majority of the world's population." Is it, then, merely a small minority of people—a few bankers, industrialists, managers and speculators—who constitute the "world"? Or is the term "world recovery" a mere abstraction?

In making their survey, the research workers of the Foreign Policy Association studied the economic situations existing during the depression years in all the leading industrial countries, paying detailed attention to Australia, Great Britain, Germany, France and Japan. Australia was included, "despite its relative unimportance in world economy," because it "merits special attention as the first country to conceive and put into operation a scientific plan for coping with the economic

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crisis." As a result of this "scientific plan"—the technical details of which are briefly listed, but would not apply save to Australia's local problem—in 1932 that country entered a phase of "definite improvement." Exports sharply increased. "The commonwealth's foreign trade showed (for the ten months ending May 31, 1934) an export balance of more than £39,000,000, which was approixmately £3,000,000 above that for the corresponding period of the previous year." Many other facts confirm the recovery diagnosis. "A budget surplus is in prospect . . . the interest on government loans has been the lowest in the history of Australia." But—and this "but" runs through all the reports, from all the countries studied—there are other facts. The recovery "has led to some increase in employment, although the number of jobless remains appallingly high." If bank deposits are mounting, "wages have not been increased to meet the advancing cost of living."

So, too, in Great Britain, where undoubtedly the tide of recovery has remarkably advanced. "Counterbalancing this gain, however, has been the somewhat sobering fact that employment has not kept pace with production," and the fact that the working class as a whole "has not shared the proceeds of recovery is indicated, moreover, by a further increase in the number of persons in receipt of Poor Relief, which is attributed to a growth in the number of persons who are, for various reasons, disqualified from receiving unemployment benefits." In other words, they are no longer regarded as temporary unemployed persons, but as paupers, and permanently paupers. Not only is this so, but even the favorable factors, when closely studied in relation to various qualifying considerations, make "many authorities . . . incline to doubt whether Britain's recovery can in any sense be considered as a basis for permanent recovery." It would profit us little to follow this sober, highly condensed, and well-documented report through the economic mazes of all the countries studied; in general, the story is everywhere the same. Confining themselves as they do to the economic aspects of the world situation, the unstable political, racial, nationalistic and religious factors complicating that situation are not considered. Yet even while the facts in the economic sphere certainly bear out the thesis that economic recovery is under way, the paradox remains; namely, that the peoples of the world are not, in general, benefiting by this recovery, except very slightly. Nowhere has employment kept pace with the gains in industrial activity. "Real wages and standards of living for the working class appear to have fallen almost universally. Agriculture has also suffered a serious loss in purchasing power." And, as the conclusion of the whole matter, according to this report, "it is evident that until consumption can be raised in line with production, there can be no basis for permanent recovery, and that such revival as has occurred will not affect the vast majority of the world's population."

That this judgment penetrates to the very roots of the economic problems, seems to be certain. Unless the many millions of unemployed can be returned to earning power—which means spending power as well—the dead-weight of their necessary support slows up, hampers and threatens to wreck the entire economic mechanism of the world. How these essential roots of the problem are to be treated is the problem of problems; but certainly those to whom Christian principles are realities must agree that until or unless the modern isolation of economic and political processes from moral and ethical truths is abolished, there can be no problem reached other than one which to Christian people must be everlastingly abhorrent. The world—the real world of men and women and children—cannot recover a human prosperity, a prosperity for all, a prosperity of liberty, under any form of economic dictatorship, whether Communist, Fascist, Hitlerist or godless capitalism. It would appear, not only from this report of the Foreign Policy Association, but from any other signs of the times, that the world crisis is developing to its climax, and that the work for which Pope Pius XI has been raising up the world-wide forces of Catholic Action must at last begin in earnest.

WEEK BY WEEK

The Trend of Events

WHILE no events of major significance occurred in the domain of national politics during the week ended, the tide of state and local news reflected the constantly altering situation in which we all live. The threat of a vast textile strike, which might involve nearly a million workers and operatives, was countered by the virtual promise of presidential intervention. Elsewhere it was revealed that radical organizations have actually fomented strikes and kindred disturbances. Silver Shirt officials, for example, demanded credit for having planned and executed several walkouts in Southern towns. California was buzzing with talk of plentifully financed activity by Communists and Fascists. In Wisconsin the La Follettes made public their program of reform, which calls for a far greater measure of socialization than Mr. Roosevelt has endorsed. The Legislature of New York agreed after some skirmishing to retain the 1 percent additional income tax against which influential groups had protested. From one end of the country to the other, individuals and organizations interested in the nationalization of

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banks gave assurance that great efforts would be made to promote this enlargement of federal economic power. Assured that tariff barriers would be lowered to permit the importation of forage for starving livestock, farmers in the Far West were reassured. Meanwhile business activity as a whole remained static, the major markets registering no important advances or retrogressions. Thus the relative calm of the week illustrated, better than some more hectic periods, the state of puzzlement and conflicting purposes in which the nation lives.

The Hitler Plebiscite

NAZI politicians asked the German people to endorse Hitler's seizure of virtually all executive power available in the country. The request was granted. But it had doubtless not been foreseen that the growth in negative votes would be so marked. The total number of dissidents was well over 5,000,000; in November, 1933, it was considerably under 3,000,000. Dispatches indicate that the "No" ballots were most numerous in the Rhineland and Berlin—districts in which the constraint under which the individual lives is less marked than it is elsewhere. It takes just six times as much courage and self-sacrifice to vote against Hitler in Bavaria, where the forces of repression are most brutal, as to vote negatively in Trier which enjoys a somewhat less barbarous rule. The 60,000 who said "No" in Munich are heroes or persons who have no longer anything to lose. Even so, however, the plebiscite reveals a mounting Catholic opposition. Though hamstrung for want of leadership and virtually paralyzed by the Nazi monopoly of the means of expression, something like a group wholly aware of the Kulturkampf now in progress has emerged. That is a glorious but also a perilous fact. We would say to Catholic America: wake up before it is too late! Now is the time to help save the Church in Germany from being overwhelmed by an onslaught of paganism and barbarism. A year hence will still be early enough to complain that the Jews know how to get publicity!!!!

Education in Mexico

LAST week we commented, in a main editorial, on recent developments in Mexico and several American reactions to them. A program of state educational control which will render illegitimate any school work by ministers or servants of religion has been inaugurated. We are now able to present a translation, from *El Universal* of Mexico City (July 31, 1934), of pertinent sections of the address delivered by General Calles at Guadalajara on July 20 and then broadcasted over a hook-up of several Mexican stations: "The Revolution has not come to an end. The eternal enemies are lying in ambush and are trying to nullify its triumphs. It is necessary for us to enter upon a new period of the Revolution, which I should like to call the psychological revolutionary period; we should enter upon this and take possession of the minds of childhood, of the minds of youth, because they are and should belong to the Revolution [Editor's Note: The construction here is that in the original text]. It is absolutely necessary to drive the enemy from those trenches where the clergy is, where the conservatives are. I refer to education, I refer to the schools. It would be very grave baseness, it would be criminal, for us, the men of the Revolution, not to snatch youth from the talons of the clergy, from the talons of the conservatives, and unfortunately the schools in many states of the republic and the capital itself are directed by clerical and reactionary elements. We cannot deliver the future of the fatherland and the future of the Revolution into hostile hands. With great cunning the reactionaries say and the clericals say that the child belongs to the home and the youth to the family. This is a selfish doctrine, because the child and the youth belong to the community. They belong to the collectivity and it is the Revolution that has the indispensable duty of taking possession of all minds. . . . For this reason I urge all the governmental agencies of the republic, all the authorities and all the revolutionary elements to go to the terrain that may be necessary because childhood and youth must belong to the Revolution." It should be observed, however, that this time the General will find more opposition in the United States, including even (probably) the Reverend Samuel Guy Inman. Nor will the Mexican opposition be limited to practical Catholics.

Snakes and Faith

WHEN Albert Teester, North Carolina mountain preacher, defied the bite of a rattlesnake in order to give evidence of his faith in the Lord Jesus, he incidentally administered a shock the effect of which may be beneficial. The experiment was based on a literal reading of a New Testament passage, which assures the disciples that they may handle serpents with impunity but which may only be a metaphorical statement of deeper spiritual truth. Again, what happened to Mr. Teester was possibly not a miracle but only a case of successful resistance to an often deadly virus. Finally the incident may be too primitive and brutal to possess deep spiritual value. All this cannot, however, impair the fact that this North Carolina preacher had genuine faith in Christ—faith which in our time is not often found in Israel. Confidence that the supernatural is the most powerful and active force tends to be lacking wherever

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religious results are expected of human agencies, be they organizations or material assets. Men can find God in a million-dollar cathedral, but there is no evidence that the cathedral as such ever helped anybody discover Him. Saint Ignatius went into a cave; Père de Foucauld retired to the desert. We often say that faith is stronger in evil times. May not this phenomenon be in large measure due to the circumstance that in such times purely human things are less often identified with aspects of the Divine adventure? Poor Teester's rattlesnake is only a symbol of those varied misfortunes which cannot harm the soul if its trust in the Saviour is deep and abiding. And so one is sincerely grateful for the symbol.

THOUGH not definitive, the latest news in regard to the production of a vaccine for infantile paralysis is full of present interest, and surely also, of ultimate promise. Since the first identified appearance of the disease—or rather since the early part of the century, when the virus was isolated—the problem of immunizing the populations, and especially children, to the infection which so often leaves tragedy behind it, has occupied many of the best medical minds of the world. Toxins have been patiently evolved—frequently as the result also of the most devoted courage of the doctors producing and testing them—for which high hopes were felt. The latest of these serums was thought by many physicians to have solved the problem at last. Now Dr. Aycock, a leading figure in the field, and director of research of the Harvard Infantile Paralysis Commission, sounds a warning against this expectation. The problem is not one of general inoculation, he says. All the research thus far made into the disease points to the fact that "the spread of the virus is world-wide . . . whereas the disease is regional, limited and selective." Hence the vast majority are actually immunized by nature, and inoculation, which is at present hazardous, should be also selective—limited to the less than one in every thousand susceptible to the disease. He is confident that further studies will show the way to isolating these potential victims, either for vaccination or for correction of their susceptibility.

The Poliomyelitis Serum

IT IS complacently taken for granted that modern civilization has conquered the tendencies responsible for the old popular and corporate brutalities. And undoubtedly the bloody arena, the auto da fe, the public and often protracted execution, belong definitely in various periods of the past. All sorts of things have brought this about—the combination of stronger sensibilities and weaker nerves, perhaps; and also, it is to be hoped, a growth in Christian consciousness, and in the democratic ideal of the dignity of man. But let us beware of supposing that the victory is fixed and permanent. Anyone who follows the tabloid press, at least, must know better. For there the thing is steadily creeping back, in the guise of pictorial entertainment. The enterprising sheets, having discovered some time ago that the appetite for morbidity is not by any means dead, are shifting more and more of their emphasis from what is, in the technical sense, obscene and hence possibly dangerous under the law, to what is frankly bloody and brutal, but publishable with legal impunity. Not so long ago the body, however it became merely a body—by a faulty gas valve, a car crash, a torch murder—was discreetly draped in the front-page photograph showing the spot where it was found. Now, it is spread out, very much of a *corpus* and the gorier the better, in all the candid appeal of violent death. That these things debauch public decency, coarsen public taste and are a vile offense in the eyes of the innumerable children who cannot avoid seeing them, is certain. Why are they permitted?

Extend the Law

THAT New Jersey has stamped itself upon circumjacent imaginations cannot be doubted. It possesses that union of characteristics which fits an entity, be it personal or geographic, to become a symbol. "Jersey justice" is an expression immediately understood; but so also is the almost equally important expression, "Jersey vegetables." Ask any Easterner at random what state has the most virulent mosquitoes or the most beautiful coastline, the ugliest flats or the healthiest climate, the worst electric storms or the best applejack—and he will answer in one word, and always the same word. Nature has set up her own marked system of balances for this state. Its very definite banes are compensated for by extraordinary benedictions; and if this reading may be reversed, then the state must be due for some unusual calamity, to even up the startling new phenomenon reported from the Oranges. Nature seems to be observing there her own system of repeal, by setting up a brewing plant in a group of maples. First the low temperatures of last winter separated the bark from the sap wood. Then the tides of spring filled the trunks with sap, which oozed out plentifully into the newly created spaces. Then yeast plants were deposited in the liquid by air current through the cracks in the bark. Then the heat of summer was turned on. Now froth makes a collar on the bark, and delicious maple hootch drips into a puddle at the roots. Not since we read of the apple-tart bushes and sponge-cake boulders in the fairy story have we been so envious.

Nature in Jersey

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MEN OF T.V.A.

By E. FRANCIS BROWN

IN THE Tennessee Valley much is happening that is unconventional, much that is new and untried. High on the list of novel experiments must come the labor policy adopted and followed by the Tennessee Valley Authority, a policy which expresses some of the practical idealism that characterizes the work.

During its year of life the agency that we know as the T.V.A. has grown to a great organization employing more than 9,000 persons. Skilled and unskilled laborers, professional workers, engineers, journalists, college professors, experts in a hundred and one fields, all have been attracted to the body that seeks to remake the life of the vast area loosely called the Tennessee Valley. Most, if not all, of this little army are enthusiastically loyal to the purpose of the project.

At the top of the personnel pyramid, of course, are the managers and their assistants. These men have been selected with great care. Experience and efficiency have been the first tests for all important appointments. When a post was to be filled, experts in that field of endeavor were asked to make recommendations. The individuals thus recommended were then investigated by members of the T.V.A. staff until sufficient information had been assembled to insure that an appointee would fit the job with some degree of exactness. Since by the terms of the act creating the T.V.A., the members of the governing board were required to be men who believe in the "feasibility and wisdom" of the plan, it was but logical to apply the same criterion to every individual selected for a major position.

The act made another important stipulation: in no instance were political tests or qualifications to be considered in making appointments. This stand, though it has caused untold anguish in many a politician's heart and may in the end prove to be a boomerang against the T.V.A., has been upheld in the face of the greatest pressure. As a result, the T.V.A. personnel has been spared the hampering if not paralyzing effects that would have arisen from the presence of a horde of office-seekers. And finally, since this hand-picked personnel is not subject to Civil Service regulations, it is anticipated that it will avoid the dead-wood and inefficiency of bureaucracy.

Naturally the skill, efficiency and morale of the managerial group are in this, as in a private business, highly important. Moreover, the recruiting of the labor force and the treatment of that group has been very special.

First of all, the T.V.A. announced that workers would be hired only after they had registered for a job and then had taken an examination to be conducted by the Civil Service Commission—although it should be added that in no sense were the workers to be Civil Service appointees. A preliminary requirement for registration was proof of residence, either of the applicant or of his family, in the areas immediately surrounding the particular job. For the work at Norris Dam, a few miles outside Knoxville, men would be taken from the adjoining counties; workers at Wheeler Dam, near Muscle Shoals, would be recruited in the nearby counties of Alabama and Tennessee. Thus not only would the Valley's unemployment problem be directly aided, but any influx of labor from distant centers would be prevented.

For the examinations, which were held in 138 centers, about 50,000 people registered, and 38,807 were actually examined. Applicants were tested for their ability to follow written and oral instructions as well as for their mechanical ability. Since illiterates were not absent, part of the test was especially adapted to them.

But the examination was only part of the method of selection. T.V.A. representatives visited the communities where the workers lived; local leaders were interviewed in search of information about an applicant's reputation for steadiness, adaptability, skill and so on; and in the end the applicants were likewise interviewed. Thus it is that a vast file of about 25,000 dossiers has been built up to assist in the selection and placing of workers.

As a result of this policy the workers are of obviously a high type—bright-eyed, clean-cut, vigorous and intelligent. Already they have proved themselves hard-working and efficient.

Because the T.V.A.'s task lies in the South, the race problem has to be faced. Seemingly it has been met fairly and satisfactorily. In each region where projects are in progress, Negro laborers are hired in the proportion their race bears to the total population of the area. Around Knoxville, for example, they are about 4 percent of the workers. The Negroes, paid the same wage scales and working the same number of hours as the whites, live apart. Otherwise there is no discrimination. And to date the policy has been accepted without protest from either side.

Wages are liberal—approximately the prevailing rate in the region ranging from $.45 an hour for unskilled workers to $1 for skilled. Work is scheduled on the basis of four five-and-a-half-hour shifts each day and a six-day week.

Before being put to work, each laborer must pass a physical and medical examination. He is

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vaccinated against smallpox and inoculated against typhoid. On the job, first-aid stations are nearby should he be injured. If disabled by accident he will, as the employee of a governmental agency, be cared for under the provisions of the Federal Employment Compensation Act. The T.V.A., however, has sought to safeguard against all industrial accidents; so far no lives have been lost on any construction projects, something to be recalled when viewing the memorial tablet at Muscle Shoals that records the men who gave their all in the building of that great dam.

At Norris, where nearly 5,000 men are at work, a town is being built and a construction camp has been completed to house the workers. The town has received an undue share of publicity. However beautiful it may be when completed, it promises to demonstrate architectural skill rather than any solution of the housing problem, for unless it be a subsidized venture the homes being constructed must rent at rates beyond the capacity of most workers' purses.

The construction camp, however, is another matter. Landscaped and situated amid forest surroundings, it resembles an exclusive hunting club. Its bunk-houses, mess hall and recreation building are semi-permanent, so that when water flows over the Norris Dam they can be used for other purposes, perhaps for small industries. Here the men live; here they are fed good food at small cost and here they are entertained and kept occupied during the long leisure hours.

There are movies, ball games and other sports. In the recreation hall there is a small library and, among other things, rooms for classes in adult education. Attendance at these classes as at the lectures that are offered is voluntary. Practical subjects like arithmetic or geology are taught. There are also opportunities offered for vocational training, to prepare workers to return to their own communities. In a building erected for the purpose men are now learning about woodworking, general metal work, the application of electricity, and automotive mechanics. Nor is agriculture neglected. Poultry raising, truck gardening, stock breeding and many other features of agricultural economy are being taught.

With these manifold interests, it is not surprising that the morale of the working-force is high. Another reason is that skilled and unskilled alike have been inculcated with the idea that they are participating in a great work that will bring happier days to the Tennessee Valley. Thus a man comes to feel that he has more than a job, that he is contributing to what may be a historic enterprise. Labor organization has also played its part in bolstering the morale. Naturally many skilled workers were members of craft unions long before the T.V.A. was ever heard of; a large number of the unskilled moreover belonged, or had belonged, to the United Mine Workers, for these unskilled laborers are drawn in great part from the desolate coal fields of Kentucky and Tennessee. For these reasons the idea of organization is not new to the workers.

Now the T.V.A. managers, guided somewhat by the NIRA, and convinced that labor must fight its own battles, has encouraged collective bargaining. At present nine shop committees are functioning—eight for the skilled crafts and one for the unskilled. These committees have so far worked amicably with the T.V.A.'s division on labor relations in settling disputes over wages, violation of codes and similar questions.

The T.V.A., moreover, has pursued in its labor relations a humane policy. Child labor, of course, is banned; the working week is made short in order to give a maximum of employment; a man is appointed to the job for which he shows peculiar aptitude; when found unsuited to a certain task, a worker is tried out in others, rather than being summarily discharged.

Furthermore, the opportunity for promotion is carefully guarded. Quoting the director of personnel in the T.V.A.: "As new positions become available, records of present employees are combed to discover whether someone who is already employed is qualified to handle the new job. In a number of cases men who started as common laborers, but who were qualified for better positions, have already been promoted to positions of greater responsibility."

The T.V.A. has also sought to find places for the handicapped. A saw filer, for example, who had lost a hand, but had learned to work by fastening some sort of device to the stump of his arm, now belongs in the T.V.A. battalions, along with a blind stenographer who works with the aid of a dictaphone.

So with a contented, efficient labor force, the T.V.A. moves ahead toward its high goal.

Portrait of a Poet

(From the Italian of Cecco Angiolari: 1258-1300)

I surely have enough of all good things—
Save for a few for which I do not care,
Such as whole shoes or raiment fit to wear,
Or even rags to warm my shiverings.
And in my purse such lack of money chings
That men, I swear, would rather meet ten devils.
Yea, lords, I have as large supply of evils
As January has not flowerings.
Of dining on scant cheer I have a feast,
Of sleeping on foul sheets, soiled and awry,
Of gulping sorry food and sour wines.
These are my troubles and they are the least.
To tell the rest of them I will not try.
A sonnet only has fourteen short lines.

THOMAS CALDECOT CHUBB.

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WHAT NEXT IN HOLLYWOOD?

By MICHAEL COLLINS

While convinced that the Legion of Decency is "well on the way to becoming a glorious success," the author of the following paper holds that the campaign has a "major defect." This is the absence of generally agreed upon criteria as to what is an indecent or immoral picture. Mr. Collins thinks there ought to be a black list, but that such a list ought not to be drawn up until a central committee has set to work. Complete boycotts seem to be precarious and unworkable; he believes in critical supervision.—The Editors.

"IN THE opinion of *Harrison's Reports,*" says the July 14 issue of that paper, "the movement against indecent pictures is the most constructive that has ever been undertaken." And the *Reports,* mind you, is a trade paper "devoted chiefly to the interests of the exhibitors." Countless other impartial organs have concurred with Mr. Harrison at least in so far as the effectiveness of the crusade is concerned.

That the movement is far-reaching there can be no doubt. More than half the ordinaries of the country have already inaugurated diocesan-wide drives, and it is safe to predict that the rest will have joined before fall. Lay societies are all agog over the matter, and it is said that 5,000,000 Catholic signatures to the pledge of the Legion of Decency may be expected before long; and this huge figures does not take into account the millions of non-Catholic signatures that will be obtained.

That the crusade has affected Hollywood is also obvious. While it may hardly be said that the producers are frantic over the matter, certainly they are not altogether unperturbed. Pictures have been withdrawn from circulation, others have been withheld, and still others have been laundered. The contractual stipulation enforcing block booking has been somewhat relaxed, ostensibly at least. The Hays office has appointed a one man censor who is to pass upon the whole Hollywood output, and it is probably significant of the producers' desire to temporize and palliate that he is a Catholic.

In short, to judge merely from these considerations, the whole movement seems well on the way to becoming a glorious success. Nevertheless, the present writer is by no means completely sanguine.

One major defect in the campaign is that we have no official criteria. We of the laity are asked to pledge ourselves "to remain away from all motion pictures except those which do not offend decency and Christian morality." But how are we to know which pictures are indecent and immoral? By the titles? Some of the most suspicious titles have graced relatively clean pictures, e.g., "Be Mine Tonight," "It Happened One Night." By the advertising? This, too, has often been deceptive, and more important still, if we are left to rely on that norm, the producers will be quick to clean or modify the advertising without altering the pictures at all. By the reviews then? But there are very few save in the secular papers and magazines, and their reviewers are largely subservient to the motion picture people because of the advertising the latter do in the organs for which they write.

There is also the consideration expressed by Martin Quigley, editor and publisher of the *Motion Picture Herald.* He says of the producers:

> Not all of them understand very clearly abstract moral arguments but all of them do understand very clearly the subject of motion pictures. They want to know what kind of pictures are wanted and they want the reply expressed concretely in the naming of pictures.

I mention this difficulty because I do think it is a logical defect in the program of the Legion of Decency. But what I should like to say, even more emphatically, is that it can be cured only by the Episcopal Committee on Motion Pictures. The reason it has not done so heretofore is presumably that stated by Archbishop McNicholas in the August *Ecclesiastical Review*:

> All are not in agreement, especially considering the question from a practical standpoint, about the advisability of publishing black lists.

But in the meantime a number of individuals and lay organizations are endeavoring to supply the defect. And I say that if they continue they will kill the movement! One group white-lists a picture and another group black-lists it, and both the white list and the black list are broadcast throughout the country. A ludicrous situation! And the very ludicrousness of it will react not merely against the mistaken but well-intentioned white-lister or black-lister but, coming at this time, against the whole movement. Another group issued a list of "non-recommended" films which were not recommended, mind you, "because of poor acting or bad technical production or offensive morals" indifferently—and this in almost explicit connection with a campaign for clean movies. This, it is obvious, is equally ridiculous and as potentially ruinous.

Anyway, how do most of these self-constituted reviewing bodies—most, I say, not all—arrive at their conclusions? Merely by searching every available reviewing service, Catholic and otherwise, and collating their findings. The results are therefore merely composite lists, and they have

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incorporated in them whatever prudery and false standards appear in the services from which they are formulated. Catholic? Well, hardly!

Some of the secular reviewing services from which these Catholic agencies cull their data condemn pictures, such as "Little Man, What Now?" largely because they consider them morbid; I wonder what they would say of "Oliver Twist." As Heywood Broun says, "No man can write a truthful story of poverty without mentioning the horrid consequences which follow in the train of misery." Others of these services condemn any story in which is involved fornication, adultery, or the birth of illegitimate children, apparently without regard for the manner of presentation. Following such standards we might confidently expect even a felicitous filming of "Days without End," "Kristin Lavransdatter," "Weeping Cross" and "The Scarlet Letter" to be black-listed. If such outright prudery will not certainly wreck the Legion of Decency, then we can only conclude that it is under Divine protection and that it makes no difference what we do with it.

Having vented so much festering spleen, the writer now feels relatively relieved. But, the indignant reader may ask, have you nothing constructive to offer? Patience, gentle reader, if you can bear with me further I shall present it.

In the first place, until the E.C.O.M.P. or our respective ordinaries provide us with some kind of list, I believe we should keep hands off. It may be that some are unable to keep their pledges (objectively speaking) because they have no opportunity of discovering which pictures are indecent and immoral. But many are staying away from all pictures which seem to be even slightly suspicious, and others are staying away from all movies. This, together with the fact that at least a few of the worst films reveal their characters practically at first sight (e.g., presumably, "It Ain't No Sin"), gives us hope that the crusade will not fail even without any lists.

Yet if it is to be as effective as it might be, I feel that we must have a list. What kind of list? Let's consider it this way: There is a certain proportion of all films produced which are unquestionably and unrelievedly vile, say 25 percent or less; there is perhaps an equal proportion entirely without blemish; and in between these two are all the disputable pictures, perhaps partly good and partly bad. To list any of the pictures in this last group would be to foment endless wrangling, with charges of prudery hurled from one side and latitudinarianism from the other. And besides upsetting many simple consciences, such bickering and quarreling would be sure to upset the whole apple-cart.

A white list would have this drawback: Endorsing "Little Women" and failing to endorse a felicitous filming of "Days without End" and the novels I have mentioned (and if disagreement were to be avoided they would have to be left off such a list) would be grossly unfair. Furthermore, since good pictures seem to run in cycles, approving only 25 percent or less of all the pictures produced would mean that we would frequently have to wait for a considerable period of time, especially in the smaller communities, before an approved picture would come to town. Human nature being what it is, such procedure would probably be proportionately ineffective.

Which leaves only the first or worst group. And while it is true that to black-list "The Blonde Venus" and not to black-list "Death Takes a Holiday" might be considered somewhat unfair, yet the former picture is so utterly indecent and immoral that it deserves no such consideration. The difficulty would remain that while the faithful would be guided away from the utterly bad pictures, they would still be left exposed to the pretty bad ones. But if the primary purpose of the crusade is, as I understand it, not merely to preserve from corruption the souls of John Smith and Mary Jones, but to cleanse the Hollywood Stables, then this objection need not be considered. For if the producers had to fear that any picture they were to produce might get on the black list, they would be a little more cautious about filming any immoral stories and introducing any improper scenes. And if we could wreck only one or two pictures a month through this method, the producers would certainly be more amenable to our protests. This, I firmly believe, would result, perhaps not in an ideally perfect screen, but at least in a clean-up all along the line, which is all I think we can hope for.

But it might be questioned, in the words of Archbishop McNicholas: "Does the black-listing of pictures bring people to see them in greater numbers, thereby making them more successful financially?" This is indeed an important question and, as the Archbishop adds, "the answer must be sought in the study of black-listed pictures and in the box-office receipts." Even in such research, however, there are some difficulties. Box-office receipts will show whether a picture has succeeded or failed; but will they show that, having been black-listed, it succeeded or failed in greater measure than if it had not been so listed? If the same picture could be shown with and without black-listing in two cities of equal size and like audience composition (are there any such?), the results would be instructive. But would such an experiment be feasible during a nation-wide clean movie campaign?

Further, if it is true that some people would be attracted to certain pictures merely because they were to appear on a black list, isn't it nevertheless likely that this attraction would be only ephemeral? The curiosity of the morbid would certainly be aroused by the first picture to be black-

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listed, and probably by the second and the third and the fourth. But if the black lists were to continue month after month, does it not seem likely that the pictures so listed would soon lose their appeal for all save the utterly prurient, those who make up the "bald-headed row" in the burlesque houses? And that such people do not comprise any very large proportion of the theatre-going public would seem to be proved by the present great disparity in attendance between movies and burlesque shows. As Archbishop McNicholas says:

> Granted that in every community there are individuals who want the salacious film [yet] the public is now giving some proof that it is insulted by the outrageous assumption that it wants in many pictures salacious scenes or indecent lines . . . and that it wants other pictures which are quite immoral.

Finally, to take the only thing comparable to laboratory evidence bearing on the question, we might consider the "Index Expurgatorius." Some few Catholics probably do read books on the Index simply because they are on the Index; many more undoubtedly read them without consciousness of the fact. Yet it can hardly be questioned that the Index is largely successful. If it were not, we might be sure that the wise old Church would abandon it, for certainly it can no longer be said to be in an experimental stage.

To summarize, then, there seems to be need of some kind of objective norm, some form of list. But, as we have seen, a grey list would only cause dissension, while a white list would be prudish, ineffective and unfair. A black list, on the other hand, would cause no dissension, would not be prudish or unfair, and could not fail, it would seem, unless we are prepared to admit that the "Index Expurgatorius" is psychologically unsound. The only reasonable alternative to this program, it seems to me, is a complete boycott of all pictures, such as is already operative in two dioceses. But it remains to be seen how long the mass of the Catholic people can be persuaded to practise what must seem to most of them heroic virtue. I doubt if this period would exceed three months—an insufficient time for the thorough and permanent disciplining of Hollywood.

MAN IN AN EXPANDING UNIVERSE

By JOHN A. O'BRIEN

WHAT bearing have the findings of modern astronomy concerning the vastness of the universe upon the traditional conception of man's place in the universe? What is their significance for the religious world view? Speaking before the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Dr. H. E. Barnes declared the findings of astrophysics necessitated the discarding of the old traditional notion of God and the fashioning of a new one. He says:

> The growth of modern science has brought about a comparable transformation of our attitude toward humanity. . . . Man tends to shrink in terms of the new cosmic outlook. Far from being the lord of all creation, existing from the beginning of things, he now appears to be but a temporary chemical episode on a most tiny planet.

Similar is the reaction of Dr. Shapley:

> The thing that appals me is not the bigness of the universe but the smallness of us. We are in all ways small—little in foresight, shriveled in spirit, minute in material content, microscopic in the vastness of measured space, evanescent in the sweep of time—inconsequential in every respect except perhaps in the chemical complexities of our mental reactions.

While not agreeing with the negative conclusions of the above-mentioned writers, Dr. Heber D. Curtis, of the Lick Observatory, agrees that the findings of astronomy do raise the question of a personal God and of the efficacy of prayers directed to Him:

> Almost literally, we humans are merely a couple of billion microbes living on a speck of dust called the earth; conceivably we, our civilizations, our achievements, our aspirations and worships, may be but an incident in some vastly greater drama. Are we microbes important enough to have a personal God interested in our welfare, answering our prayers, rewarding us for good and punishing us for evil?

The writers previously quoted, in common with others, answer this question of Dr. Curtis with a "No." What are the reasons upon which they base their answer? While I have waded through a good deal of literature from the pens of astronomers, astrophysicists and other writers, including sociologists, who have shown considerable resourcefulness in picturing the staggering immensity of the cosmos, I have failed to find any clear reasoning by which they arrived at the conclusion mentioned. They simply pile up figures to show the extent of the universe, the number of stars, planets, nebulae, their sizes and distances, and then conclude: The universe is so large and man so small that he shrivels into cosmic insignificance. On the scale of values he is not even a featherweight as compared with giant stars having a waist line of 100,000,000 miles. Being so small and living on such a dwarf planet, man is too

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insignificant to be taken cognizance of by a cosmic Deity.

When disentangled from the mass of astronomical statistics, and from adjectives calculated to overawe the imagination, and reduced to simple syllogistic form, this line of reasoning, if such it may be called, is found to be strikingly naive. It is a capital illustration of the fallacy of identifying magnitude with value. It is the simple notion that whatever is large is therefore great.

To the little boy watching the circus parade, the greatest animal in the parade, indeed in the world, is the elephant. Why? Because it is the hugest. Its bigness awes his imagination. To the scientist the tiniest organism, such as the microscopic streptococcus, invisible to the naked eye, is of far surpassing interest. It is more marvellous in the complexity of its protoplasmic organization and more baffling in the intricacy of its nuclear structure than the mountainous pachyderm that monopolizes the child's attention.

Thoughtful European observers have pointed out that the tendency to identify magnitude with value finds its most marked manifestation in America. Indeed, it has become an American characteristic. Everyone will recognize the following symptoms which are encountered almost daily. A newspaper is continually boasting of having the largest number of subscribers in the state, seeking to imply that it is, therefore, the best in all that territory. A man boasts of coming from the largest city in the state, implying that he is likewise of similar importance. This identification of bigness with greatness seems to be part of the naïveté of youth—of a youthful individual, a youthful city or a youthful nation. It is an excrescence which age rubs off.

As a matter of fact, there is no intrinsic connection whatsoever between size and value. The element which is the primary determinant of value is not quantity but quality. Because Betelgeux has a girth of 273,000,000 miles, is it of more value than an ameba whose girth is one-one-hundredth of an inch? Would Antares with its diameter of 430,000,000 miles weigh as much on the scales of value as a fecundated human ovum whose diameter is so small as to be invisible to the naked eye?

Yet there have been those who, upon learning the enormous size of nebulae and planets, and the number of the stars that glitter in the Milky Way, have straightway crooked "the pregnant hinges of the knee" and fallen down to adore them because they are so big. They are the latest recruits to the strange cult of megalatria, the worship of the large. Thus if there be any validity to the line of reasoning which prompts Barnes, Shapley, Bertrand Russell and others of their school to extol the universe because it is so big and to berate man because he is so little, consistency would require them to fall on their knees before a dunghill, if only it were big enough to reach to the moon.

The positive element of the ritual of megalatria consists in extolling the magnitude of the universe. The negative consists in disparaging the dignity, the uniqueness and the worth of man. Its high priests refer to him varyingly as "the disease of the agglutinated dust," as "a microbe," as "a temporary chemical episode on a most tiny planet," as "an animal among many, precariously situated on the crust of a planetary fragment." According to the high priests of megalatria, the emergence of personality was "a fortuitous inadvertance on a midget planet lost in the immensities of stellar space, and Christian faith in the primacy of personality involves an utter and even humorous lack of perspective."

This disparagement of the dignity of the human personality will be found upon analysis, I think, to be traceable to the pet fallacy of this school of thought, the identification of size with value, and the consequent confusion of quantity with quality. Persons who become obsessed with the task of measuring, weighing, counting and determining the physical attributes of the material universe are inclined to forget that human life has its qualitative side as well.

The love of friends, the quest of truth, the hunger for righteousness, the enjoyment of beauty in earth and sea and sky, the joy of intellectual achievement—are not these the qualities which give to human life its value and its meaning? What is there in all the stretches of nebulae, planets, star dust and Milky Way making up the cosmos that is comparable in value to the personality of man? It has been observed that a celestial voyager might travel through the cosmos from rim to rim and yet not detect the little planet upon which we live. In such a case it might well be that the voyager had missed the most significant thing in the universe—the intellectual and spiritual life of man.

It is true that there may conceivably be other and even higher forms of life elsewhere in the universe. But at the present time science has discovered no evidence of the existence of anything in all the millions of worlds that even remotely approaches the personality of man. Professor A. E. Eddington thus concludes his study of "Man's Place in the Universe":

> I do not think that the whole purpose of the creation has been staked on the one planet where we live; and in the long run we cannot deem ourselves the only race that has been or will be gifted with the mystery of consciousness. But I feel inclined to claim that at the present time our race is supreme, and not one of the profusion of stars in their myriad clusters looks down on scenes comparable to those which are passing beneath the rays of the sun.

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While preserving an open mind and a hospitality for all the new findings of science, philosophy must formulate its judgments of value on the basis of known facts and not upon speculative possibilities which lie in an unknown future. In the light of all that science has been able to discover about the cosmos, "personality," as Professor Haldane of Oxford has said, "is the great central fact of the universe."

The fact that man has been able to reach out a hundred million light years into space, to measure, weigh and chart the orbits of the myriad worlds that course through the vast reaches of interstellar space, should be sufficient evidence that man cannot be adequately described in terms of neurons, blood vessels, lungs and bones, or in any merely quantitative terms. The chasm which separates the two outermost rims of the universe is not half so broad nor half so deep as the gulf which yawns between the physical and the mental, between the material and the spiritual.

To see man only as a more complex organization of the same elements constituting the nebulae and dust of the stars is to overlook entirely the distinctive element of man—his intellectual and spiritual outreachings. It is like describing the search for truth, the lure of beauty and the love of friends in terms of blood pressure and physiologic processes. Such a description would be as inadequate as it would be ludicrous.

The failure to discern the qualitative aspect of personality springs from the same basic confusion of size with value, of bigness with greatness. The frank acceptance of the new vista of the immensity of the cosmos does not disturb the substantial accuracy of the picture of man and his unique dignity as painted centuries ago by the immortal Bard of Avon:

> What a piece of work is man! How noble in reason! How infinite in faculty! In form, in moving, how express and admirable! In action, how like an angel! In apprehension, how like a god! The beauty of the world! The paragon of animals!

Truth, justice, honor, mercy, love—what scientist has ever weighed, measured, or dissected them in his laboratory? Yet these are the ideals that move the world. For them men have left the comforts of home and have walked fearlessly into the jaws of death. Father Damian leaves his native Belgium never to return again, to give his life in ministering to the outcasts of human society, the lepers on the island of Molakai. Rather than decrease the little food supply for his three starving companions, Captain Oates walks out from his tent down on the Antarctic continent into a raging blizzard. Dying on the bleak stretches of an uncharted wilderness of ice and snow, his frozen body bears mute but eloquent testimony to the primacy of the spiritual in the life of man. Hundreds of thousands of men and women in all walks of life have gone down to unmarked graves, unheralded and unsung, in fighting for such intangible realities as justice, liberty and truth.

Imagine a member of the school of thought to whom all values are measured in terms of physical quantities, seeking to appraise the worth of such personalities as Plato, Michelangelo, Dante, Francis of Assisi, Newton or Einstein, by analyzing the chemical constituents of his body. He will find, as Dr. A. L. Sachar has ingeniously figured out:

> enough fat to make eight bars of soap, enough iron for four or five ladies' hair pins, enough sugar to fill an average size sugar bin, and enough salt for a few salt cellars. There will be enough potassium to fire off a little toy cannon, and enough magnesium to whitewash four and a half square inches on your back yard fence. These and other elements taken together would bring about $.73.

When reduced to these plain terms, is there anyone who does not see the ludicrousness and the mockery of trying to weigh the human personality on the scales of material values?

A decent regard for the unique dignity of the human personality is entirely consistent with a full appreciation of the wonders of the sky and for all those secrets eked out by the patient labor of many generations of astronomers. There need be no minimizing of the marvels of the universe. What is the purpose of the countless millions of worlds and solar systems coursing through the regions of immeasurable space? Does life in any form exist on other planets? Are there rational beings peopling other worlds? These are but a few of the many mysteries which are veiled from our eyes.

They are not, however, of recent origin. Nor are these questionings the result of the impact of the new astronomical findings upon our world view. They have been with us since the days of Copernicus and Galileo who first destroyed the Ptolemaic cosmology and in so doing revolutionized the whole world view of the race. In further expanding the universe and in shrinking the earth, astronomers have not substantially altered the Copernican picture of the universe. The difference between it and that of Jeans and Eddington is one of extent and not of kind.

In the discovery that there are billions of stars instead of merely millions and that they are more distant than was previously estimated, I find nothing that prompts me to exclaim, "I am a worm and not a man." On the contrary, I find in such discoveries new and deeper admiration for the unconquerable spirit of the mind of man that reaches fearlessly out into the vastness of interstellar space, measures the planets and charts the stars in their courses. Before the shrine of the human personality with its unfathomed mystery of intellect and spirit, I bow in reverence.

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SEVEN DAYS' SURVEY

The Church.—The Catholic University of America has just published its first announcement of courses at the School of Social Work which is opening this fall, under the leadership of the Reverend John O'Grady, "to provide trained leadership for Catholic social work in the United States." * * * Father Charles Buya, first native priest of the western Congo, was ordained at Luluabourg in the presence of fifty missionaries and 30,000 faithful. Many of the natives had walked or cycled from great distances to witness the ceremony. After fifty years of missionary activity Catholics in the Belgian Congo number more than 1,000,000 today. * * * The president of the Catholic Central Verein of America announced at the annual convention that the Verein had helped fifty German Catholic refugees, driven out of Russia and stranded in Manchuria in pitiful circumstances, to start life anew in South America. He also commended the Maternity Guild movement promoted by the Catholic Women's Union. * * * "The Social Year," a 600-page volume published by the International Labor Conference at Geneva, Switzerland, praised Catholics for their social work throughout the world and made special mention of the "Statement on the Present Crisis" issued last year by a committee of American bishops. * * * A retreat for unemployed men financed by voluntary contributions was to begin at Auckland, New Zealand, August 24. * * * "Education and the Christian Social Order" was the general topic considered at Nice by the annual French *Semaine Sociale* which was attended by delegates from all parts of France and from twenty other nations. * * * The International Congress of Thomist Philosophy, devoted this year to moral and social problems of the present time, will meet at Posznan, Poland, August 28-30, under the auspices of the Primate of Poland, the General of the Dominicans and the Superior General of the Jesuits.

The Nation.—Congressman Henry T. Rainey of Illinois, Speaker of the House, died August 19 in St. Louis. Ordering flags to half staff, President Roosevelt set out for the impressive funeral of the picturesque Representative who had served in the Capitol since 1903. As Speaker of the Seventy-third Congress, willing and diplomatic supporter of the New Deal, especially of its inflationary elements, he was one of the most important leaders on the Democratic front. It is expected that a Southerner will take his place as leader of the House. * * * In Rockford, Illinois, Secretary Wallace declared in favor of a National Economic Council to coordinate activities of NRA and A.A.A. Two days later in Washington a White House conference was held to discuss a threefold program looking to coordination of A.A.A. and NRA, coordination of other emergency activities such as housing, relief, public works, and to the elimination of conflicts between NRA, the Federal Trade Commission and the Justice Department. Meanwhile a complete internal reorganization of NRA is expected to follow conferences President Roosevelt will hold during a month's stay at Hyde Park. * * * Internal Revenue collections in July were $195,592,058, a gain of $64,476,389 over last year. Liquor and beer taxes reached a new monthly high of $38,823,580. Income taxes went up $9,725,550. * * * Huey P. Long forced laws through the Louisiana Legislature setting up a state dictatorship under his personal minions. His opponents accuse him of planning a nation-wide revolutionary movement. * * * Food prices in July reached the highest point in thirty months; factory employment fell 3 percent and factory payrolls 6.8 percent. Non-manufacturing industries showed a mixed trend and the Bureau of Labor Statistics offered no general figures. * * * The United States officially accepted membership in the International Labor Organization, operated parallel to the League of Nations in Geneva.

The Wide World.—On August 19, Adolf Hitler became the world's champion autocrat, outdistancing everybody since Genghis Khan. A total of 38,279,514 ballots were cast for him; 4,287,808 went against him; and 871,056 were invalid. The number of affirmative voters was, therefore, 2,312,425 lower than it was in 1933. Observers generally estimate that part of the decline is due to a "bourgeois" reaction against the policy exemplified on June 30, but point also to a marked increase of "No" votes in the Catholic Rhineland. Hamburg, normally a Socialistic city, cast only four-fifths of its ballots for Hitler. In view of the circumstances, this plebiscite was therefore something of a blow, even if a weak one. Foreign commentators generally applauded the brave negators, but could not deny that on August 20 Hitler had acquired almost unprecedented power. * * * The Schuschnigg government, after giving Franz von Papen an exceedingly cold reception, turned to the prospect of new conferences with Mussolini and to the task of cleaning up in the wake of the Nazi putsch. On August 20 the total of Nazi executions was eleven. * * * Open charges that the will left by President von Hindenburg had been faked and that the Field-Marshal had actually bequeathed his power to ex-Emperor Wilhelm II were made in various newspapers. It was asserted "on good authority" that the deviser of the changes had been Dr. Goebbels. * * * The trade war raging between England and Ireland as a result of President De Valera's refusal to continue making annuity payments led to numerous disputes and even battles during the past week. In Cork pro-government groups came to blows with representatives of General O'Duffy's "blue-shirt" movement. Farmers were resisting attempts at eviction for failure to pay taxes. * * * Diplomatic relations, hitherto tenuous enough, were suspended between Manchukuo and Soviet Russia, pending settlement of numerous disputes which have raged along the frontier. Moscow countered by saying that

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Japan had resorted to a policy of terrorism against employees of the Chinese Eastern Railway in order to force the sale of this artery of trade at a low price.

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The Biggest.—A bandit gang, working as though directed by a Hollywood scenario writer, on August 22 robbed an armored car in Brooklyn of $427,000 cash. This is the largest cash loot on record and a theft surpassed only by a few mail and bank robberies in which securities formed the bulk of the value seized. Gerald Chapman stole $2,400,000 in his famous Leonard Street mail robbery, and in 1930 gangsters took $3,000,000 from a bank in Lincoln Nebraska, setting the record. A man disguised as a peddler and another who looked like a prize-fighter were unobtrusively waiting at an ice plant when an armored car drove up to collect the money from the safe and take it to the Federal Reserve Bank. About $19,000,000 a day are thus transported through the streets of New York City. As the door of the truck opened, the peddler uncovered a submachine gun lying in his push-cart, three automobiles stopped and about ten men displayed various types of armament, cowed twenty-two witnesses, seized all but $29,000 of the money in the truck, and rushed away in their cars. They left behind them one machine gun which the guards took into the truck and, racing after one of the cars, used several times in vain. After more than an hour three of the bandits left one of the cars and took the money into a speed boat which was docked about seven blocks from the scene of the crime and disappeared. In spite of a dragnet covering five states and all the local waters, and the pursuit of 420 city police cars and two airplanes, no clue had been picked up at the end of the first day.

The Geneva Jewish Conference.—Representatives of Jewish organizations in all parts of the world convened in Geneva. Dr. Nahum Goldman reiterated the determination of all to fight Germany through use of the economic boycott. This, he said, "is the spontaneous reaction of mortified Jewish self-esteem," and he added: "The masters of the Third Reich, who always have the words, 'honor,' 'dignity' and 'self-respect,' on their tongues, should be the last to take exception to our answer to the challenge which they have forced upon us. We have known more powerful adversaries than the Third Reich and we have outlasted them." On the other hand the delegates noted that the tide of anti-Semitism was rising almost universally, owing to the pressure of economic conditions on societies eager to make some one minority a scapegoat. Dr. Goldman asserted that the position of the Jew throughout eastern Europe was precarious or worse. M. André Spire, a Paris delegate, expressed the belief that hostility to Israelites is increasing in Poland, Rumania and Austria, while even the United States is manifestly suffering from contagion. It was agreed that Palestine was a source of refuge for those obliged to migrate, and that in Russia the dominant social philosophy was gradually suppressing the forces of Jewish tradition. Plans for a World Jewish Congress in 1935 were elaborated.

How to be Popular.—Major Angas, a British money economist and broker who boldly and accurately predicted the collapse of rubber in 1926, the rise of gold shares in February, 1931, the course of British recovery since 1931, and the Wall Street upswing of last year, caused an intense and pleasant sensation in American financial districts last week when 11,000 copies of his new book, "The Coming American Boom," were distributed within twelve hours. Writing in a gay and dogmatic manner directly for speculators, he presents one long and bullish market tip: Buy. Buy "commodity" securities, buy deflated "rubbish," buy equity shares in investment companies, in fact, buy anything. Serious-minded critics found the analysis extremely superficial. It dwells persuasively on the money and credit elements of the New Deal and points out the undoubted mechanical potentiality of unprecedented credit inflation (unprecedented even in 1929) based on the condition of American finance. But all this implies "other things being equal," and a chorus of critics, led by James P. Warburg, pointed out that the other things are not equal and are more fundamental to business prosperity than money manipulation. None the less, brokers found idyllic wish fulfilment in its pages, and Wall Street houses bought as many as 2,500 copies to brighten up their recently funereal customers' rooms. The market appropriately advanced for the day.

Fritz Gerlich.—The list of those slaughtered in the June 30 Hitler "purge" grows longer and longer. Too little attention has now been given the facts concerning Dr. Fritz Gerlich, whose murder in a prison cell on that fateful night adds another to the many reasons why the Nazi creed is more than a political aberration—is, indeed, the handwriting on the wall of European civilization. While editor-in-chief of the *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten,* Dr. Gerlich became interested in the strange case of Teresa Neumann; and as a result he became a convert to the Catholic faith. Since the great Munich paper was not affiliated with the Church, Gerlich resigned but transformed an illustrated Sunday magazine into a Catholic paper known as *Der Jerade Weg.* This was an ardently anti-militarist journal, which became very popular and during 1931 and 1932 battled vigorously against both Communism and Hitlerism. With the accession of the Nazis to power, Dr. Gerlich's days were numbered. He was imprisoned during March, 1933, and was held in very close confinement. A collaborator managed to escape but was pursued by Hitlerites to Austria and murdered there. On June 30 of this year, executioners shot Gerlich without according the opportunity to part from his friends or to receive the consolations of religion. His name is therewith linked with those of Klausener, Probst, Beck, Schmidt, Heim and others as a Catholic victim to the repressive fury which now rules Germany.

Constitutional Change?—According to Dr. Karl Westphal, a German observer writing in *Hochland,* the Munich review, the most impressive thing about the Roosevelt administration is its tendency to reform the out-of-date aspects of the American system of govern-

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ment, and to suggest—as far as possible—the desirability of English method. He cites the fact that Mr. Roosevelt read his inaugural message to Congress in person, that he stressed the need for closer cooperation between the executive and legislative branches of the government, and that he was even suspected of desiring to create the office of "Premier." The NIRA and other laws are cited as proof of the effort to place more authority in the presidential and Cabinet offices. On the other hand, Congress still has the power to check this drift and to throw the business of the country once again into the meshes of disputation. Dr. Westphal believes that parts of the Constitution are as outmoded as the stage coach, and that one effect of such an old-fashioned arrangement is the helplessness of the United States in the terrain of foreign policy. But no other modern system of government produces better results.

The Real Issue.—The London *Universe* for August 10 prints an account of recent sessions at the Catholic Social Guild's Summer School at Oxford, in which university and seminary professors, public officials and civil servants, teachers, workers in many industries and unemployed men took part. Christopher Dawson was one of the lecturers; he described the subordination of man, body and soul, to secularization as the real issue in the struggle between Marxism and Catholicism. "The Communist will deny the subordination of men to a secularist State, and yet . . . teaches that man will never triumph until he devotes all his energies to secular matters. The Communism of Marx and Lenin is a step toward this end; in it there is no place for the Christian nor the Christian soul. . . . It is the duty of Catholics to provide a more vigorous opposition to the secularization of society." They "should not be satisfied to be passive recipients of the Faith; they should be active in the diffusion of this wonderful gift to the world. The future of the Church may depend upon the apostolate of the laity and the increasing culture of the workers. For this reason . . . he concluded that the foundation of the Catholic Workers' College is the most significant feature of Catholic Action in the country [England] today. . . ."

* * * *

Approaching Bed-rock.—In its Pittsburgh and Ohio hearings, the National Steel Labor Relations Board seemed to be approaching the vital controversies of labor organization under the NRA. On August 16 the Board ruled that the management of the West Virginia Rail Company (operator of steel mills) had no legal interest in the form of organization adopted by its employees and had no right to any list of union members. That is, the Board asserted its right to determine the majority organization, by holding an election, in spite of a company's objections and in spite of the Wierton injunction. On August 20, Earl F. Reed, attorney for the Wierton Steel Company, made a seven-point blanket objection to the jurisdiction of the Steel Board, holding it altogether unconstitutional. If this issue is kept clear, it can probably be settled only by the Supreme Court. The Steel Board also has before it a petition of the Apollo Steel Company, requesting permission to meet spokesmen both of the majority and minority groups of its workers. The automobile settlement permitted this practise, but in settling the Denver Tramways dispute, bargaining was allowed only between the employer and majority representatives, and the minority spokesmen were only permitted to petition for redress of grievances. The determination of a final policy on this basic matter was expected soon.

The Best Policy.—The Proprietary Association, which represents 80 per cent of the huge United States package drug industry, has recently set up an advisory committee to insure greater truthfulness in its members' radio, newspaper, magazine and other printed advertising; toilet preparations are not included. William Y. Preyer, first vice-president of the Vick Chemical Company and chairman of the committee, described their aims in part as follows: ". . . The total impression of an advertisement must be truthful as well as its individual words and sentences. . . . Testimonials must be honestly secured and must not be contrary to what may be reasonably expected of the product. There must be no unfair reflection on other products. Allowances must be made, of course, for the natural enthusiasm of the advertiser. . . ." The committee will have no coercive power but will "operate as a court of common sense, giving constructive suggestions" which they believe will have considerable weight with the entire package drug industry. The committee seeks to "serve the proprietary industry with such a degree of enlightened self-interest that it recognizes the necessity of protecting the public first, because only by so doing can it protect the manufacturer from unwise or short-sighted action. . . ." This is said to be the first organized attempt of an industry to eradicate questionable advertising ethics in its own group.

A Stalwart Defender.—At a press conference, August 16, Secretary Wallace stated that there would be no serious shortage of food in the United States because of the record-breaking drought. In the New York *Times* for August 19 Mr. Wallace vigorously attacked opponents of the A.A.A. as "believers in an industrial and agricultural wonderland where nothing is managed but where they imagine all things work for the best, and especially so for 'the best people.'" He reaffirmed his confidence in the A.A.A. and declared, "Our program to secure for farmers a pre-war parity price for their products has a definite and demonstrable connection with city employment rolls. When farmers are permitted to go broke by the millions, as they were by the old deal, our greatest single domestic market for city goods is shattered; factories are closed; bread lines are lengthened, and again are lengthened by the migration of dispossessed and desperate farmers seeking jobs in town, at any price. . . . We badly need a new alignment: conservatives vs. liberals; those who yearn for return to a dead past comfortable for only a few, vs. those who feel that human intelligence, freed and exercised, can lead us to a far more general abundance and peace between warring groups."

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COMMUNICATIONS

THE LEGION OF DECENCY

Salzburg, Austria.

TO the Editor: I am spending my vacation abroad and therefore saw THE COMMONWEAL of June 29 only a few days ago. I have read with great interest the editorial and noticed the plan to establish two lists for all moving pictures: a recommended or white list and a non-recommended or black list.

Such a plan seems very good, but has in my opinion one great difficulty. There are a large number of films which cannot be explicitly recommended by a board made up of priests and laymen, and which on the other hand should not be put on a black list. It seems to me that there should be either three lists—recommended, neutral, and non-recommended films—or only a black list, no white list. The films to which I refer may be grouped as follows:

Group 1. Movies have developed into an every-day amusement for many people. This means that a very great number of films have to be produced every year, and it is impossible that all these should be really good films, just as it is impossible to produce a large number of really good novels every year. The majority of the films will be low-brow, which is not at all in contradiction to being decent. There will be numerous Western films, mystery and detective plays, thrillers, "Tarzan stories," sentimental love stories, slapstick comedies, all of which can be entirely innocent from the moral standpoint, and therefore should not be put on the black list. But I cannot quite see that they should be recommended by the board; such a recommendation, to my mind, implies more.

Group 2. This comprises propaganda films for some cause which in itself is not morally forbidden. Take, as an example, "The House of Rothschild." It does not contain anything objectionable from the standpoint of Catholic morals and is of excellent artistic quality, but it is very definitely a propaganda film with a number of historical inaccuracies and strong anti-German bias. I do not see that it can be put on a black list but I would be very sorry to see it "recommended" by a Catholic board.

Group 3. This is an even more difficult group. It contains high-brow problem films, exotic films, historical films. Many of them do not present a subject which one would call "in agreement with Catholic morals." Still I would be sorry to have this group disappear completely by being put on the black list. Let me give examples: "Strange Interlude"; "Eskimo," which showed in the most interesting manner and beautiful photography the life of the Eskimo, depicting surely not Catholic morals, but their morals, which require that a man put his wife at the disposal of his friends; some films on the South Sea islands; Russian films which are often frankly Bolshevik propaganda but usually are most interesting photographically, socially and artistically.

For these films there should be established a neutral list, or there should be a black list only, on which they would *not* be put.

KARL F. HERZFELD.

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor: In the current COMMONWEAL you say that censorship of the arts is certain to come "if the industries concerned will not or cannot take their last chance to restrain themselves." That, I take it, is a threat.

A common citizen with nothing at stake in this business but my personal liberty, I concede the right of any religious denomination to recommend certain plays, pictures and books to its members, and to condemn such others as it deems unfit. I recognize this right, I say, and I respect it with all my heart and soul.

However, I contend that religious bodies are operating outside of their province when they seek to establish themselves as official or semi-official censors of the arts for all the people. Will you tell me how it is possible to justify this extension of your legitimate position?

ALBERT HAYDEN.

Hartford, Conn.

TO the Editor: In THE COMMONWEAL, July 20, I read with interest the apparently "favorable" review of the picture "Of Human Bondage" by your distinguished Mr. Skinner. In the *Sunday Visitor*, July 15, the same picture is "condemned." What is the answer? *Dissensio apud doctores?*

REV. CHARLES L. HEWITT.

CARDINAL GASQUET

Downside Abbey, England.

TO the Editor: There will be many of the readers of this review who will have known the English Cardinal in his several visits to the United States, and of his highly serviceable works for the Catholic Church, especially among English-speaking people. His historical researches and writings have a classical character, and his great contribution as head of the Vulgate revision has made the entire Catholic world a debtor. Moreover, his genial nature, and his readiness to lend assistance at Rome, in America—for which he cherished an affection—and in England, to all who sought it of him, will be gratefully remembered.

It will, therefore, be of interest to the readers of this letter to learn that a noble memorial has been erected in Downside Abbey Church, a tomb in marble with recumbent figure in white stone, and above, a beautiful canopy in gilded wood. The design was that of Sir Giles Scott.

The costs, £2,574, were met by Downside and English friends of the Cardinal, with the exception of a present deficit of about £310. I have undertaken to secure this amount that is lacking, and hope my appeal to our American people will cancel the debt. Will those of your readers who are willing to help, send their donations to me or, if they prefer, to a friend in the United States who has kindly promised to receive and forward all gifts?

Cheques may be sent to Foster Stearns, Esq., Hancock, New Hampshire, or to me at this address:

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BOOKS

A Prince of the Church

Recollections of Seventy Years, by William Cardinal O'Connell. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. $3.50.

COMPLETE reliance and absolute faith in the will of God have brought from the streets of Lowell to the cardinalate of the Church a life whose every turn has been in the direction of an advancement prepared for and inevitable, but always unsought. The autobiography of William Cardinal O'Connell fulfils a long-felt need in the history of the American hierarchy. Written in a vigorous, sincere and richly virile style, the book is a true representation of the life it chronicles.

Born of Irish parentage whose ancestry included the famous Daniel O'Connell, environed by a social system based on the virtue of wealth and the vice of poverty, and educated in a public school system saturated with the narrow views of Puritanism, the young William O'Connell early learned the nobility of his race, the joy and fortitude of honest living, and experienced the ever-broadening influence of opposing a circumscribed outlook with Catholic vision. The city of Lowell lent just such an atmosphere for the training of its youth in the immediate post Civil War days. The factory system was the Northern way of slavery, wealth was might, society was empty snobbery, and education was limitation. Surmounting these obstacles, and inspired by the sympathy of an understanding mother, William O'Connell entered St. Charles's College, Ellicott City, Maryland. Here he found an outlet for his innate Irish culture and drank deeply of the Pierian Spring. These were minor, however, in relation to the exploration of his soul and the growing awareness of his vocation. Illness caused him to return to Lowell, and later he completed his baccalaureate course at Boston College where he acquitted himself academically *Summa cum laude.*

Upon being presented to his archbishop the wish of his heart was realized when he was informed that his training and ability merited for him a theological course in the Eternal City. But shortly after his ordination Father O'Connell was obliged to return to America because of a malady for the cure of which the climate of Rome was ill-suited. This was a very real disappointment, for it meant the degree of Doctor of Divinity had to be forgone.

Father O'Connell spent his days as a curate in Medford and Boston. In this latter assignment he experienced all the solace, joys and fatigues of busy parochial life, for his parish, besides being extremely large, had within its limits eight hospitals and one jail. All the while he was being prepared unknown to himself for the next step in his kaleidoscopic career, namely, the rectorship of the American College in Rome. This appointment brought him into close contact with the powers of Church and State, and because of his mature judgment, his wise policies of administration, and his sympathy for his students he was elevated to the episcopacy of the See of Portland, Maine.

Once more his zeal for the Faith and his genius for organization came to the fore, and Rome, recognizing his

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ability, wished to confer upon him the Archbishopric of Manila. Surveying the situation calmly and carefully, Bishop O'Connell presented his reasons for non-acceptance which were so far-seeing in their wisdom that Rome withdrew the appointment and shortly afterward commissioned him as Papal Envoy to Japan. This mission was executed with such success that soon came the further promotion as Archbishop-Coadjutor of his beloved Boston. Not long after he succeeded as Archbishop.

By this time the Archdiocese of Boston had grown to such proportions that a complete reorganization was necessary. It must be remembered that the United States had been considered as a missionary country and as yet the exactness of diocesan organization according to the prescriptions of canon law had not, of necessity, been too closely followed. Archbishop O'Connell felt that the time was now at hand for such organization. Immediately he set himself to the task of restaffing several of the older charitable institutions and of building new ones. The Seminary of St. John's had now reached the state where a faculty of secular priests was considered advisable. There was also a need for new parishes, which Archbishop O'Connell created judiciously, insisting upon a fitting beauty of church structure. The principle of strength in unity prompted the archbishop to effect a union of Catholic societies here in America which served well the cause of the Church at a critical period. The *Pilot,* archdiocesan paper, was given new life and character. Catholic charities were centralized to effect efficiency and to prevent overlapping of duties. Probably the crowning achievement of reorganization was the establishing of the Curia. Heretofore the bishops had acted as their own Curia, but the increase in Catholic population and the consequent removal of our missionary status made a change imperative. Aware of this, Archbishop O'Connell set the example for the American ordinaries by establishing a Chancery, a Matrimonial Court, a Bishop's Council and including the already established offices of vicar general and secretary. Also through his efforts the work of the Propagation of the Faith was transferred from Lyons to Rome, the center of Christendom. In 1911 his efforts were rewarded by his elevation to the cardinalate.

The book concludes with two chapters on the lives of the four Popes whom Cardinal O'Connell has known personally, and a résumé of the many influences which have served to make him an outstanding prelate of his Church and a citizen of the first order. The entire work prompts one to repeat the words expressed at his episcopal consecration, "Ad multos annos."

HAROLD T. FIELD.

Social Change

The Coming American Revolution, by George Soule. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.50.

GEORGE SOULE'S purpose in writing "The Coming American Revolution" was not, evidently, to draw a prophetic picture of a violent change of power and governmental form in the United States. The book is more of an historical treatise analyzing the content and

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motive power of political, economic and social change. It is a work of concise organization, ordering the widespread and competent thought of American socialistic analysts around the dominant idea of the transformation of capitalism to a unitary, non-profit and controlled economy. The tendency toward this change and destination is assumed to exist and the orientation of the writer is sharply and exclusively focused in this direction.

This distinction between a revolution and a revolutionary crisis is drawn clearly. The revolution embraces "basic changes in ways of conducting affairs . . . a new alignment of social classes," intellectual ferment, division in the ruling class; and at the crisis the old ruling class is supplanted by a new one, there are a series of shifts rightwards and left, and a sanguinary episode when the old dominant class tries to regain its position. George Soule shows how America fits into the revolutionary pattern, especially during the "crisis of the thirties" when the changes under the surface have gained momentum and the rigid system is unable to cope with them. The New Deal appears in the book as a feint toward a politics of economics to build up the anarchy of *laissez-faire,* soon contorted and narrowed, however, into a tentative planned government for profits, excluding the broad issues of political economy and mass welfare. It does not give us an appropriate way to work in our new environment; we still need a basic change in methods to accomplish the fundamentally different tasks imposed on us by historical change. Mr. Soule expects "planning for profits" to fail and a new crisis to come, or more than one, and then probably a revolutionary period with the characteristics a general reader associates with revolution.

PHILIP BURNHAM.

Academic Autobiography

Reminiscences of an American Scholar, by John W. Burgess; with a Foreword by Nicholas Murray Butler. New York: Columbia University Press. $3.50.

JOHN W. BURGESS was born in middle Tennessee in 1844, and before he had rounded out his life span of eighty-six years he had occupied positions which gave him the opportunity to sit in judgment on men and events in a memorable period of the history of his country. These recollections cover the period of his life from his infancy to the end of the Spanish-American War. The experiences he recounts of his early days in the South during the time of the Civil War, his student days at Amherst, and his life in a German university, afford irrefragable proof of the social and intellectual transformation that took place in the United States during the last half of the nineteenth century. Burgess joined the staff of Columbia College, New York, 1876, saw it changed into Columbia University, and was chosen to head the School of Political Science which signalized the birth of the new university. The remainder of his life was given to the service of Columbia.

Burgess is a frank, but not censorious, critic of men and events. He was by inclination and training a teacher, but he does not allow the academic viewpoint to detach

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him from the actualities of life. He had many opportunities to form independent judgments of world affairs, and his influence was always on the side of restraint and moral standards in national and international politics. The School of Political Science at Columbia became a power in the land, but it would be an injustice to connect the name of Burgess with all that the school has produced. The essay on "The American University," which is reprinted as an Appendix, can still be read with profit by those who pretend to speak for American higher education, and ought to be a corrective to some of the ridiculous statements which are made concerning the character and needs of university life in the United States.

PATRICK J. HEALY.

Vivid Pictures

Testimony, by Charles Reznikoff. New York: The Objectivist Press.

Jerusalem the Golden, by Charles Reznikoff. New York: The Objectivist Press.

I WONDER what secret mordant enables Mr. Reznikoff to etch the vivid pictures of his prose. But whatever it is he has attained with it no mere pictorial brilliance. There is an inner revealment in these vignettes, something incisive and profound. In the simplicity of the writing one must not allow Mr. Reznikoff's uncanny power of selection of the details of his pictures, to escape notice. For, in addition to the right words in the right order, to drag in part of an old definition, there are here also the right objects so arranged that they stand out almost stereoscopically. That is some of the secret, right there. Of course understatement plays its part but that is after all only the writer's way of saying, "Don't look at this," and thereby perversely compelling the reader's attention. Not having room to present some of the terrible sea pictures, I ask you to look at this instead, from "Testimony." It is called "Depression."

"It had stopped raining. He was walking home with his brother. There was a puddle of water on the sidewalk, shining in the afternoon sunlight, and when he came to it, he slapped his brother on the arm and said, 'See, there is money, can't you see? I will make money out of that. That is the biggest thing in the world to make money out of.'

"In the middle of the night it was raining and thundering again. His wife woke up and found that he was gone. She didn't know where he could be. She got up and lit the lamp and waited an hour or so. At last she heard him on the attic stairs; he came into the room, dripping wet, the water running from his hair, and his nightgown pasted to his flesh. He had been up on top of the house. He said it was very nice on top of the house when it rained and the lightning flashed; he liked it."

The poetry, in "Jerusalem the Golden," has, in addition to this clarity, also a mystical, clairvoyant quality.

The man is a consummate artist in words. There is no doubt of that. In both his poetry and his prose, but especially in the second there is an amazing lucidity.

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Briefer Mention

First Communion Catechism, by Rev. P. Henry Sullivan. New York: George Grady Press.

PAMPHLET catechisms badly need simplifying. Father Sullivan's is not a list of inane remarks designed by some fanatic for the so-called "child mind," but it is really clear and practical. Each page has questions and answers, phrased in good monosyllabic diction, as well as a practical summary at the bottom. The author wisely resorts to further questions as a means of explaining what is contained in a key answer. One suggestion might be made: it seems dangerous to suggest that "God is displeased or angry when I am naughty." Would it not be better to say that "God can do less for me when I am naughty"? The pamphlet, which sells at a low price, bears the Imprimatur of the Bishop of Springfield, Massachusetts.

Good-bye, Mr. Chips, by James Hilton. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. $1.25.

YOU CAN read all about Mr. Chips in an hour or so. He was a master at an English school, who lived to be very old and entitled to wads of reminiscence. There was nothing spectacular about him excepting the fact that he could think of so many very ordinary things, which Mr. Hilton has now wrapped in verbal cotton quite like the cumuli which surround venerable, calm-looking saints in baroque pictures. The book is a triumph in the art of that sentimentalism which the British like just after having been especially realistic, and which Mr. Alexander Woollcott is sure to recommend to all his friends. It can be guaranteed to hit almost every soft spot in the reading public.

Hoxie Sells His Acres, by Christopher La Farge. New York: Coward-McCann. $2.00.

MR. LA FARGE has elected to write his straightforward, if somber, first novel in verse. It is a *tour de force,* manifesting considerable ability in verisfication but no poetic power that might not have found complete expression in prose. Interestingly enough, however, the technique adopted provides opportunity for long speeches which would seem strange in any other medium. Perhaps the verse-novel is destined to permit escapes from the trammels of naturalistic conversation.

CONTRIBUTORS

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